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ABSTRACT

This paper presents some initial work on a general theory of being and society, using power as the dynamic principle. Power is used to explain individual, group, and institutional behavior as well as the statics and dynamics of societies. The paper is addressed especially to educators because education is shown to be education in power. Distribution of educational goods in a society is a process of ascribing power to particular individuals, groups, communities, and classes. Significant educational change is a process of substituting old power arrangements with new ones, and educational policy-making is a development of statements by the elite in a society expressing intentions to direct and harness the power of education for particular outcomes. It is suggested that all individuals should develop their powers to the maximum, should learn to experience power without necessarily having to exercise it on others, and should exercise power with all moral compunctions. (Author/IRT)

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POWER: THE ANCHOR OF STABILITY, THE LEVER OF CHANGE (NOTES TOWARDS A GENERAL THEORY OF BEING AND SOCIETY)

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This paper, which has taken more years to develop than weeks to write, was inspired by Bertrand Russell's assertion that power is a concept as fundamental to social and behavioral sciences as energy is to physics; and that "the laws of social dynamics are . . . only capable of being stated in terms of power in its various forms."[1] /Italics added./

We have taken up the challenge in Russell's statement and moved towards doing what he suggested could be done. We have taken some halting steps towards a general theory of being and society, using power as the dynamic principle. We have used power to explain individual, group and institutional behaviors as well as the statics and the dynamics of societies. We have used power to explain affection and anger, and competition and collaboration. We have proposed an exciting possibility--a sociophysics of human behavior.

The material has been addressed especially to educators. Education, at best, will be shown to be education in power. Distribution of educational goods in a society will be shown to be a process of ascribing power to particular individuals, groups, communities and classes. Significant educational change will thus be discussed as a process of substituting old power arrangements with new ones; and educational policy-making as development of statements by the elite in a society expressing intentions to direct and to harness the power of education for particular social outcomes.

Finally, it will be suggested that we should all develop our individual powers to the maximum potential of each of us; should learn to experience power without

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[1]Bertrand Russell, Power: A Social Analysis. New York: W.W. Norton, 1938, Page 15.

necessarily having to exercise it on others; and that, when we do exercise individual power, and power ascribed to us to reorganize educational and social arrangements, we should do so with all moral compunctions.

July 31, 1975 H.S. Bhola

POWER: THE ANCHOR OF STABILITY, THE LEVER OF CHANGE
(NOTES TOWARDS A GENERAL THEORY
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I. INTRODUCTION

Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.[1] Each generation of school boys is taught this statement and most remember it too well. It is one of those overwhelmingly powerful half-truths that make any careful analysis of power well-nigh inpossible. For powerlessness is as corrupting as power. Indeed the powerful get corrupted only when those around them are powerless. When power is appropriately distributed in a society, the corruption of power does not take place. Appropriate distribution of power is not equal distribution of power, however. Indeed power must be differentially distributed within a social system for societal work to get done.

Power is Neutral

Power should be looked at as a neutral human attribute or a system characteristic, neither good nor bad in itself, but capable of both right and wrong. Power is not something that can only be used by tyrants to tyrannize over others; by the exploiters to exploit the down-trodden or the naive; by the authoritarian to take away individual freedoms and personal dignity from the weak. Power can be, and has been, put to positive, creative, and moral uses.

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[1] It should be interesting to study historically the emergence of Western conceptualization of the nature of power and the morality of its use; and to contrast it with existing patterns of its use in day-to-day social and political relationships in Western societies. The conceptualizations of power and its moral use, as developed in the Chinese, Hindu, Budhist, Inca and Islamic cultures, should also be most instructive. These rather fascinating questions, unfortunately, cannot be pursued here.

Moral use of power has indeed been the civilizing influence in human history. Law after all is a manifestation of power, assuring the liberties of the less powerful against those who may be more powerful and less squeamish. In other words, society is impossible without a systematic distribution of power among its members. Civilization is impossible without moral use of power in societies. Individual fulfillments are nothing but the development and assertions of individual power.

II. POWER--A NEW DEFINITION

Power has been defined in social science literature often in relational terms. Cartwright,[1] for example, suggests that, "Power is a relationship between two agents; it is not an absolute attribute of a single agent."

Cartwright's definition, we assert, is unduly restrictive. Power is indeed an absolute attribute of a single agent and it manifests itself in different ways. Often power may be merely <u>experienced</u> by an individual agent in terms only of himself. At other times, power may be <u>exercised</u> in relation to the power of other agents who also singly have individual powers. We must consider the possibility that men may experience power without having to exercise it in relation to others to change or to reinforce their behavior.

Power is a universal human attribute. It consists in the human urge to act on the environment--both physical and symbolic. It is the life force; the pulse beat is its basic unit. It manifests itself in behavioral acts that intervene materially or symbolically in the environment. Thus, to <u>be</u> is to be

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[1] Dorwin Cartwright, "Power: A Neglected Variable in Social Psychology," in Dorwin Cartwright (Ed.) <u>Studies in Social Power</u>, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan, 1959). Also Dorwin Cartwright, "A Field Theoretical Concept of Power," <u>Ibid</u>., Pages 183-220.

powerful; to intervene is to arrive, and to relate. Not to be powerful, is not to be. Not to intervene is not to be a social being.

Some further statements may be made in an elaboration of the nature of power:

1. Power, in relation to the system within which it inheres, is not a fixed commodity. Like air and water, power can be seen as an inexhaustible public resource.

2. In a power transaction between A and B, increase in the power of A need not be at the cost of the power of B. Thus, while one power transaction may involve a win-lose situation, another power transaction may not.

3. In a power transaction, power in social-symbolic system X may be surrendered for the trade off of experiencing power in social-symbolic system Y.

4. In a particular social situation, an individual A may have one kind of power over another individual B while at the same time being subject to a different kind of power inherent in the individual B.

5. Behavior patterns for experiencing and exercising power are learnt and thus become subject to socialization and cultural norms.

III. POWER AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Man experiences power by acting on the environment. The anthropoid acted on the material environment by bending, breaking, moulding, clearing, digging, tearing, biting and coercing. When man became a symbol user, he created a symbolic environment as well, and learnt to experience power by acting on the symbolic environment. He envisioned, he composed, he designed, he organized, and he ordered.

Power and Individual Identity

Individuals acquire their identities through and in the experiencing of power. They separate their "self's" from the environment by acting on it.[1] They define their integrities in terms of their needs for and modes of experiencing power. All human behavior is power play.[2] But man now does not only use nails and teeth but also words and phrases in making these interventions in the environment to experience power. He does not merely dig holes and beat others into submission; he proposes theoretical constructs and attacks social institutions. He not only leads armies, he proposes ideologies that make those armies move. He does not engage in mere activity, he undertakes artifactual action to make history and culture.[3]

Experiencing and Exercising Power

In the preceding, we have suggested that man may experience power without having to exercise it on another; in fact, without having to exercise it on the outside environment at all. An implication should be made clear. Power can be experienced without exercising it. Power cannot, however, be exercised without experiencing it. It is possible for man to experience power without exercising it because man not only has an outer environment, but he also has an inner environment. This inner space has become available to man because of his symbol-using behavior. It has given him consciousness. He can identify with the hills and the big expanses of water and feel powerful. He can

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[1]See George Herbert Mead, Mind, Self, and Society, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934.

[2]Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture, London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1949.

[3]See H.S. Bhola, "The Grammar of Artifactual Action," a companion paper available from the author. (Mimeo; August, 1975).

relate; create understanding; envision; commune with God and be omnipotent. Ananda, the state of blissful consciousness, is a heightened experiencing of power in one with the cosmos.

Individuals as Power Entities

Individuals are born with different power potentials. Through socialization they develop different needs for experiencing power. They also develop propensities for particular modes of power. This fact enables societies to create their elites and to develop order and compliance arrangements that might be mutually satisfying for the elite and the hoi poloi.

IV. TYPES AND FORMS OF POWER

Two major forms of power should be distinguished as Somatic and Symbolic. Somatic power is of the body, it is physical, corporeal. Symbolic power is rooted in the man's ability to use symbols to make interventions in the environment and to create realities symbolically. Two types of power should be differentiated further as Inherent and Ascribed. There is power that is inherent in individuals because of their somatic and genetic characteristics; because of the way they have with words; and because of their understandings. But power may also be ascribed to individuals by social-symbolic systems in which they are located. The table on the following page should lend meanings to the distinctions made above:

Table-1. A Matrix of Individual Power

	Inherent Power	Ascribed Power
Somatic Power	Heavyweight champion A ravishingly beautiful woman	A "packaged" filmstar or a political candidate
Symbolic Power	Poet Preacher Yogi Artist Industrialist Strategist Architect Scientist Landowner	Father Teacher Administrator Judge Army General

An individual's total power potential may be some combination of all these categories of power; and an individual may bring different types and forms of power into play at different times in different situations.

Currencies of Power

The symbolic nature of power, and the possibility of power being ascribed to individuals results in power coming in different currencies. Some of the currencies of power, embedded in the table above, are:

--information, knowledge, talent and expertise

--money and goods

--machines--as the extensions of man--and technology generally

--strength, status and office.

In the dynamics of change, especially in an adversary situation, a protagonist unable to muster power resources in one currency may decide to use an altogether different power currency. Gandhi's demonetization of the British power currency of violence by the power currency of nonviolence is a remarkable example of this phenomenon in recent history. Martin Luther King used the same strategies later in the United States in the 1960's.

V. POWER PLAY IN HUMAN INTERACTIONS

We assert that all human interactions are power transactions. In other words, power need not always be used in adversary win-lose formats. Power may be used competitively and cooperatively; it may be used to coerce and to co-opt; it may be used for hurtful action and for affection.

To demonstrate how power enters these varied and, in terms of their social qualities, opposite phenomena, the following points should be made:

1. As part of the strategies for survival in the course of human evolution, some older modes of experiencing power were discarded, and some newer modes of experiencing power were learnt.

2. Each of these newer modes of experiencing power is rooted in a particular social-symbolic system. In a particular power transaction between two individuals, both those individuals may not be experiencing power within the same social-symbolic system. One individual agent may be "winning" and experiencing power in System (S_1). The other may be "losing" in (S_1) but experiencing even greater power in System (S_2). That is, while engaging in the same set of power transactions, each person may be marching to a different drummer.

3. The quality of a power transaction between two individuals may sometimes be explained better in terms of the actors in the configuration immediately surrounding the dyad. For example, two agents may be collaborating simply

for mutual increment of power in relation to a third agent in the field that is competetive with them.

Equipped with these understandings we can explain the apparently contradictory phenomena of affection and argument, of competition and collaboration between two individuals in terms of power transactions. Competition between two individuals is clearly a setting in which both individuals can experience power by acting on each other (as in wrestling) or on the symbolic environment (as in campaigning for opposite parties). Collaboration between two individuals, again, could be seen as a setting for these two individuals to experience power together in relation to a configuration of power transactions surrounding the dyad. An individual in a dyadic power transaction may forego opportunities to experience power at the cost of the other (and experience not frustration but affection) because he may be experiencing power in a larger social-symbolic system such as fatherhood, sisterhood, teacherhood and friendship.

VI. POWER AND THE GROUP PHENOMENON

The individual's desire to experience power, his desire to enhance the experience of power by experiencing greater power and different modes of power, leads him to create collectivities such as groups (and organizations). Individuals make psychological contracts (power transactions) with each other to coalesce their individual powers to create greater power and to be able, thereby, to make more significant and more satisfying interventions in the physical and symbolic environment. Each individual invests <u>part</u> of his or her power in the group which often comes to acquire a much greater power than its separate parts. It should be remembered, however, that individuals in joining groups seldom surrender all their individual powers. Such total surrender would mean bondage, not group membership. To wit, it is only a part of the individual power which

is invested in a group, and this is generally with the objective(s) of creating frequent, varied, and greater opportunities to experience power for individual group members.

Thus seen, groups are power fields emerging from a multiplicity of power transactions and power contracts between and among individual members; and these power fields, in turn, relate through power transactions with outside individuals and groups, institutions and communities, to make material and social interventions in the environment, in the hope of providing satisfying power experiences to group members.

The formation and subsequent dynamics of peer groups, street gangs, task oriented groups, and reference groups can be understood in terms of these groups being networks of power transactions that offer their members special experiences of power.

VII. ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS AS POWER ARRANGEMENTS FOR DOING SOCIETAL WORK

When groups become highly problem-oriented and develop a sense of continuity over time, certain things happen to them as power fields. Psychological contracts, as far as possible, become clearly-stated written contracts. (We say "as far as possible" because psychological contracts are sustained within formal organizations as well.) Power transactions within the group get streamlined and formalized. That is, certain individuals and subgroups are put under obligations to engage in power transactions with each other. Development of a pecking order is not left to chance; leadership is not left fluid to arise situationally. That is, groups become organizations.

Institutions as Power Fields

Institutions and organizations are thus power fields brought about for

multiplying the power of individuals to do societal work systematically and with continuity by engaging in power transactions between and among members of the organization and with appropriate actors in the environment.

Unlike groups, institutions use highly formalized rules for creating power fields that would be efficient and effective. There is a division of labor. There is a chain of command. Mutual expectations between various role incumbents are clarified as completely as possible. No wonder most organizations have the shape of an arrowhead, as shown below:

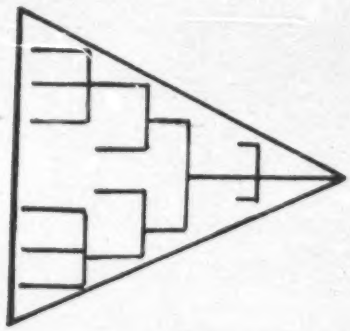

Figure-1. The typical configuration of a formal organization

Roles and Personalities

Again, as we have indicated before in our discussion of groups, individuals do not surrender all their power to organizations and institutions. In the case of organizations, as well, individuals commit themselves to the organization only as role performers and not as total persons. They surrender part of their power and not all of it. There is another aspect to this relationship between individuals and the organizations they join. Organizations make contracts to hire role performers but they get real persons who bring to their organizational life the excess baggage of their personalities.

VIII. SOCIETIES AS POWER FIELDS

To go from a definition of groups and institutions as power fields to a

definition of societies as power fields is not too big a conceptual jump. To quote from an earlier paper[1]:

> We have already suggested that the human individual should be seen as a nucleus of power with inherent potential for making power transactions. A multiplicity of power transactions between individuals territorially confined within the same social space may be seen as resulting over time in a "system of interferences," a power field with boundaries; in other words, a social organization. This social organization may be formal or informal, termporary or semi-permanent, cohesive or incoherent
>
> The larger society then may be conceptualized as an emergent power field resulting from many power fields informal and formalized, temporary and semi-permanent, coterminous with, built in, and built around each other, overlapping and intersecting at multiple planes.

Ascribed Power and Social Structures

We have already referred to two types of power: inherent and ascribed. Human beings discovered quite early in human history that battles of power need not be fought and won afresh every day. A pecking order was soon established within any aggregate of individuals who came to be together. When different social-symbolic systems came into being, human beings invented symbolically determined pecking orders--they used different symbolic modes to ascribe power to different individuals within a social-symbolic system.

The symbolic systems used to ascribe power to individuals--irrespective of their individually inherent power--are, what we call, social structures. These social-symbolic structures may be formal or informal; and the ascriptions of power may result from ascriptions of roles or statuses. All ascribed power must, however, be rooted in social structures and symbolic systems: of the father in the family, of the teacher in the school, of the priest in the church,

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[1] H.S. Bhola, "The Design of (Educational) Policy: Directing and Harnessing Social Power for Social Outcomes," Viewpoints, Vol. 51, No. 3 (May 1975), Pages 1-16.

of the judge in the Judiciary, of the policeman in the State, and of the President in the Constitution. It should be clear that these social-symbolic systems can be nepotistic, communal, racial, secular, global, or cosmic.

Differential Distributions of Power

Societies, as power fields, must have power so distributed in them so that some individuals have more power than others. Indeed if all members in a society had equal power, it would be impossible to develop social integrities. There would be no institutions, no societal work would get done, and we would have no civilizations.

Different types of political systems are built upon different distributions of power within the polity. (See Figure below.)

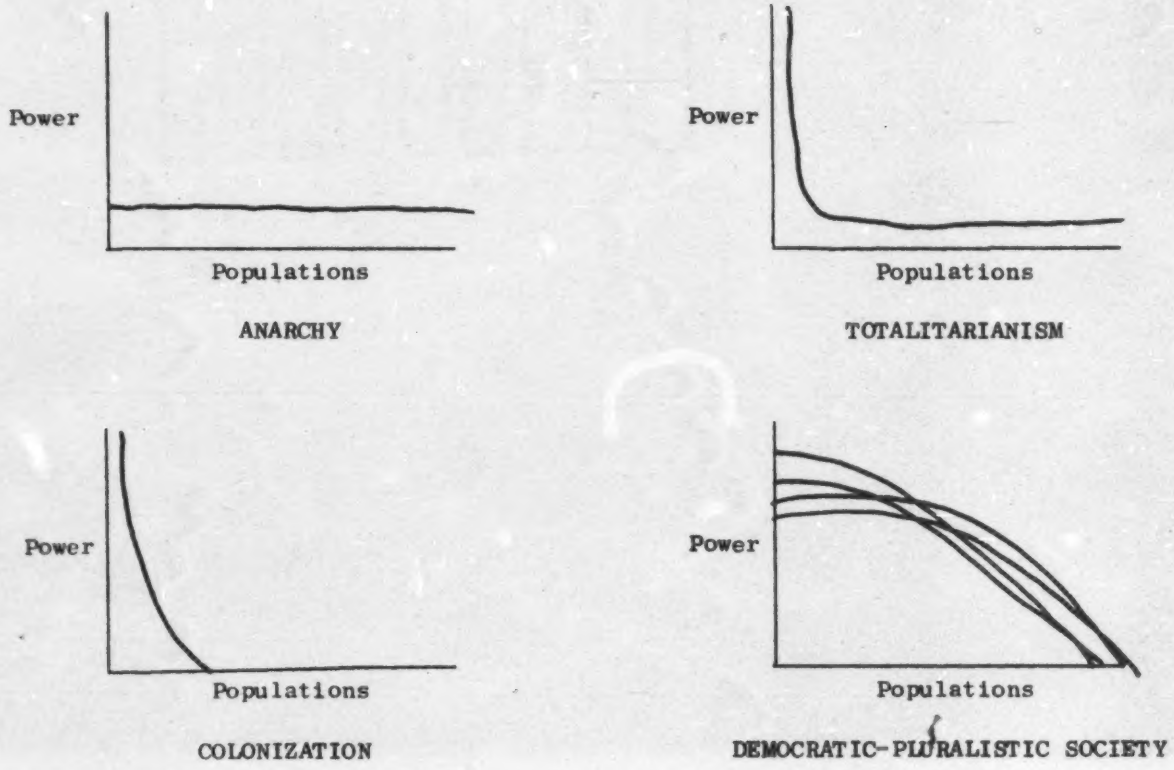

Figure-2. Distributions of power within different political systems.

The Purpose of Political Theory

Since different political systems could be seen as different distributions of power, the sole purpose of political theory should be to discuss such distributions of power in a society, evaluate methods of ascribing power to power holders, define the limits of power thus ascribed to power holders, lay bare the processes of recruitment of power holders and their mobility, and discuss questions of accountability and justice.

IX. POWER AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS

We must now face the "So what" question. What can we do with the conceptualization of power as presented in the preceding? What is the usefulness of defining individuals, groups, institutions and cultures in terms of power and looking at all social dynamics as consisting in power transactions?

Parsimony is the first and the most significant virtue of this conceptualization. Second, it lays bare the levers of change within all kinds of social systems and can enable us to develop a generalized grammar of artifactual action ranging from ideological invention, through policy making, revolution, reform, unionization, organizational change to tutor-taught relationship. Third, it puts education in an interesting perspective--all education can be seen as education for power and some useful issues can be raised about the role of education in society. Fourth, by accepting the reality of power in all human transactions, the conceptualization can enable us to deal with the questions of appropriate distributions of power in the society, and within organizations and institutions; develop ideas about "civilized" forms and modes of experiencing power; and discuss the moral use of power in the world we live in, and want to make more humane.

Power and Human Behavior

Once we have accepted the definition of power presented earlier, it becomes possible to explain the behavior of individuals, groups and institutions in terms of power. Concepts such as individual motivations, deviancy, altruism and sacrifice, reference groups, organizational climate, and bureaupathology, can all be theoretically translated in terms of the power variable.

Power and Individual Behavior

We have asserted above that to experience power is the most basic human urge. We have suggested that to be is to be powerful. Concepts such as motivation, deviancy, and altruism indeed should be possible to explain in terms of this new conceptualization of power.

Some social psychologists have considered the human motive to remove imbalance and dissonance from the environment as the primary source of human behavior. It is not within the scope of this paper to critique the whole tradition of homeostasis models and cognitive dissonance theories. We need to point out only that these theories are not universally accepted. Human beings have indeed been known to deliberately create tensions and dissonance around themselves; and the search for balance and equilibrium is neither universal nor perrenial. We, therefore, consider the human urge to experience power by intervening materially or symbolically in the physical and symbolic environments surrounding man to be the primary urge.

The human need to play, in itself, can be seen as the satisfaction of the human urge to experience power by intervening in the environment. All human motivations may be seen as different symbolic translations of the single urge to make satisfying power transactions. The state of good mental health may then be seen as a state of mind where there is overall satisfaction with the power

transactions being made with the surrounding environment. Deviancy and emotional ill-health, on the other hand, may result from an individual's failure to make satisfying power transactions within the typical and socially-shared environment, and the individual's desire to create a world of his own, howsoever artificial and dysfunctional, but within which he could make satisfying power transactions. Altruism and personal sacrifice are behaviors which provide an individual opportunities for experiencing power within specialized social-symbolic systems, systems of ideas which he has learnt to prefer to the crude and matter-of-fact, day-to-day systems of ideas that are satisfying only to lesser beings. In other words, people who offer personal sacrifices, including the ultimate sacrifice of their own lives, are people marching to different drummers.

Most therapeutic approaches to helping individuals may thus be seen as approaches that have two basic elements. One, the individual may be enabled to experience greater power and get rid of a sense of helplessness through a rearrangement of the network of human relationships that surround that individual. Two, the individual may be brought in touch with a new social-symbolic environment where he or she can experience power and draw satisfactions which are denied to him or her in the more immediate but punishing and exploitative environment.

The Inside-Effects of Experiencing Power

Since individuals acquire their identities through and in the experiencing of power, opportunities to experience great power, ascribed through social and political processes, often give individuals who thus came to power, new personal identities. There is a great amount of literature, some anecdotal and some seriously analytical, pointing to the fact of election to high

political office, changing the lives of elected officials for good, and beyond repair or return. The same phenomenon can be seen within university settings; the vice-president or the dean may decide to leave the trappings of office and return to research and teaching, but the power he once held may still hang over his head as a halo.

The Tension Between Inherent and Ascribed Power

A large lag between the inherent power of an individual and the power ascribed to him may create tensions for the individual. In such cases, some individuals may show better relational and leadership behaviors if their ascribed power is reduced; some others, if their ascribed power is increased. If no measures are taken to remove the lag between the inherent and the ascribed power of an individual, dysfunctional behavior may emerge. We would have more to say about this under the section "power and organizational behavior."

Power and Group Behavior

We have already suggested that groups come into being to enable group members to experience a life of power not available to them individually. Often, individuals join such groups in their immediate environments and personally participate in these groups. However, individuals may sometimes join groups merely through identification. They may see themselves as part of a particular group which exists only as an occupational or interest category. Such groups are called reference groups and provide individuals, as do other groups, opportunities for experiencing power through identification and reference. All other aspects of group dynamics can also be explained in terms of power.

Power and Organizational Behavior

Within organizational settings the realities of power relationships are

rather obvious. Groups change themselves into organizations through the need to exert power consistently and continuously in the attainment of articulated societal tasks. An organization indeed is nothing else than a power station, of social power, of course, created to deploy power for the accomplishment of societal tasks. Looking inside the organization, we find that the whole hierarchical system is based on power. It is a system of order and compliance. The emergence of informal groups within organizations can, again, be explained in terms of power. They come about for two reasons. First, they provide opportunities to participating individuals to develop alternative systems of power and power satisfactions. Second, they become the vehicles for negotiating power deals with the formal power structure within the organization. The social psychology of the trade union movement has been explained in power terms. As Victor A. Thompson[1] has pointed out, trade unions emerged when the assembly line worker became easily replaceable and hence powerless. There were no more craftsmen and artisans working in factories but wage earners who performed routine tasks and for which tasks they could often be trained in a matter of hours. Trade unions had to emerge to give some power back to the assembly line worker. Again, what Victor A. Thompson[2] has called bureaupathology and bureausis can be explained in terms of power. Bureaupathology develops among individuals when they find that their abilities are not congruent with the powers ascribed to them by organizations. A tension develops between the system of ascribed powers and individually inherent powers. Bureausis, a situation defined as one involving fear of all organization, may again be attributed to an individual's sense of powerlessness in the face of a larger power system.

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[1] Victor A. Thompson, Modern Organization. New York: Alfred A. Knopf., 1961.
[2] Ibid.

Power and Cultural Phenomena

Such diverse phenomena as social stratification, artistic and literary movements, religious revival and political strife can also be explained in terms of power. This section will be further expanded at a later time.

Power as a Lever of Change

The lever of change in individuals or within groups, institutions, communities and societies is power. Change can indeed be defined as the creation of new power experiences for individuals and new power relationships among individuals, groups, and structures. Change, by definition, must involve perturbation in the power equilibrium within a social system.

Change Among Individuals

To promote individual change, one must create opportunities for the adopter individual to experience greater power by being able to make more satisfying power relationships; or relate the adopter with new symbolic systems wherein he can experience power and make transactions so that power lost in one system can be compensated with power gained in the other. Since power comes in various currencies, a power bargain often ends up being merely a good bargain. It may involve greater economic rewards or improved social statuses. Thus seen, an agricultural extension agent may be able to promote adoption of new agricultural innovations by individual farmers if, not only the economic, but also the status and power ramifications of improved production and marketing of agricultural produce, are brought out. Bigotry may be gotten rid of and positive attitudes engendered if the subject can be cured of his helplessness and his economic and social fears; and if, at the same time, he can be offered experiences of power in a different social-symbolic system. Such actions as

family planning, health extension, and literacy work as well as new value orientations may also be linked with more satisfying power bargains to promote their acceptance.

Change Among Groups

Power is also the appropriate lever for change in groups. The power of the group may be made available to the individuals making up that group; and the change that individuals would not accept individually, they might accept as a group. This technique has been tested in a well-known experiment by Kurt Lewin wherein he persuaded women to use inferior cuts of meat during the scarcities of the Second World War. This was possible to do only in a group setting. Street gangs experiencing crude power could be brought in touch with new social-symbolic systems and new sources of power and made to rewrite their social-psychological scripts. Groups could also be changed by changing the power networks surrounding them and by building new interfaces between a group and the surrounding power fields--groups, institutions and communities. These interfaces may lead to cooperation, competition and other new adjustments.

Change Within Organizations

Power, again, is the staple of organizational dynamics and organizational change. Since power within organizations is hierarchically distributed, initiatives for organizational change within organizations often come from above. In normative organizations, it may be necessary to take everyone along but elite-generated "participation" should not h[illegible] the fact of who has the power to take initiatives for change and to veto decisions about change. The organizational elite may so arrange a situation that the proposed change offers greater satisfactions with power experiences to everyone involved. Or they may have enough power at their disposal to enforce organizational change, and then go on to

create incentive systems that transform mere toleration into acceptance of innovation and change.

If change within organizations has to come from below, alternative power systems must be built to fact up to the existing formal power structures. This would mean creation of informal groups that create alternative power through organization of individual members of the organization and through coalitions with outside power structures such as trade unions, and sympathetic groups of protesters and strikers. As pointed out earlier, Victor A. Thompson has explained the emergence of unionization in power terms. He points out that the assembly line production of goods made the assembly line worker so powerless, that an alternative mechanism like the union had to be invented. The whole movement towards humanized organizations can be explained in terms of new relationships with power in the Western societies. In the West, the absolute and the authorized elite[1] today are experiencing power by inventing social-symbolic designs for society and polity that are egalitarian, involving new and more equitable distributions of power. The instrumental elite who work within organizations have already "learnt" the new relationship with power in the new symbolic systems being talked of by these ideological elite. They find their newly learnt power relationships in conflict with the power relationships that actually exist within organizations. What did not disturb them at all ten or twenty years ago, today puts them under extreme personal tensions. It is for this reason that new modes of organizational relationships--adhocracies and temporary systems--are being invented.

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[1]For a classification of the elite as absolute, authorized and instrumental, and a discussion of their social roles, see H.S. Bhola, "Notes Toward a Theory: Cultural Action as Elite Initiatives in Affiliation/Exclusion," Viewpoints, Vol. 48, No. 3, May 1972, Pages 1-37.

Change Within Societies and Cultures

Society being a power field emerging from many different power fields, social change means change in power relationships in a society, and stability means a continuation of existing power relationships in a dynamic equilibrium.

The dynamics of change and stability within social systems can be accommodated in a paradigm as follows:

Power holders (the power elite),
and those seeking power (the contending elite),
to actualize different ideologies,
take policy initiatives,
using different forms and currencies of power,
and different power strategies,
to bring changes within smaller power fields (groups, and institutions),
to thus generate change in the larger power field--the society.

The power holders are the elite that we have talked about in the preceding section. They are not only the political elite, they hold power within different and overlapping social-symbolic systems. Their names may be Jefferson, Lincoln, Jesus, Nanak, Gandhi, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Saul Alinsky, and Ralph Nader. They are already in power or they are seeking power. They are the elite of the establishment or they are the contending elite. This set of assertions clearly implies that social change is initiated by the elite and does not begin at the grassroots as is often wishfully suggested by some. Undoubtedly, discontent at the grassroots does provide conditions for the elite to transform this discontent into social movements, but waterfalls don't grow into hydroelectric stations through some natural processes. They have to be engineered

and built at appropriate places to harness the energies of the rivers and waterfalls. In fact significant social needs and related social change acquire definition only within ideological systems, systems of ideas about Man and his relationship with other men. The invention of such systems of ideas provides opportunities to the absolute elite to experience power by intervening in the social environments symbolically. The authorized elite change ideologies into policy statements as they attempt to direct and to harness social power for new social outcomes.

Different forms of power may be used by the absolute elite, the authorized elite, and the instrumental elite--who come to implement the visions and the policies of the former two--to bring about change within societies. Different groups and institutions may be selected to carry the burden of change. Different calendars and schedules may be employed. One set of choices may lead to revolutions, another may lead to reform. One set of approaches may lead to change here and now, another may be a ploy for gradualism. One set of choices may lead to populism, another to institution building.

X. EDUCATION AS POWER

Education at best is education in power--understanding power, cultivating power, learning to experience power within desirable social-symbolic systems and through ethical modes.

Understanding power should be a part of the education of all men. It is through developing understanding about the nature of power and of the dynamics of power within groups, institutions, communities, and societies that individuals can avoid the dehumanization that comes from powerlessness. It is through an understanding of power that man can engage in praxis, what Paulo Freire considers to be man's ontological vocation.

Cultivating Individual Power

Education should assist individuals in cultivating individual power. It should introduce them to newer symbolic systems that are now part of the human environment and teach them to experience power within those civilized segments of the human environment. Finally, education should teach individuals to make moral use of power cultivated by them.

An individual can acquire or cultivate power by learning the manipulation of symbols. Learning language behavior that is discriminating and subtle is one way of increasing individual power potential. This behavior is not available to the literate men alone, though literacy should help considerably in developing this facility. Even more important, in the cultivation of individual power, is understanding of symbolic systems created by man. This means understanding of the human organization, of human institutions and their behavior. We have already referred to an individual's inner space. Understanding must involve understanding of the self. Knowing oneself is part of an individual's cultivation of power.

Organizing Education

If individuals have to be educated in newer and more humane power relationships, educational institutions must be differently organized. Brutal organizations cannot teach kindness. Strictly hierarchical organizations cannot socialize their members in egalitarian and open relationships. Educational institutions, therefore, must be built according to those values that they wish to teach to the generations of students that pass through them.

Educational Goods and the Society

Since education is power for individuals, the distribution of educational goods in a society determines the nature of that society. It determines

whether the society is just or unjust, whether all the different sections of the society are being provided opportunities for participation in the system or whether some groups and classes are being systematically shut out.

Approaches to policy analysis of educational policies can and must be based on the above considerations.

XI. POWER AND MORALITY

As we have indicated earlier, man the symbol user has come to acquire a consciousness. He not only uses power, he wants to use it with a purpose. To choose between different purposes he uses a value system, a sense of morality. So it has become possible for man not to use power even when he has it and could use it; and deliberately to develop symbolic structures which create different distributions of power among peoples in a society. These are questions of morality and ethics.

XII. SOME HYPOTHESES AND GENERALIZATIONS

In the preceding, we have presented what we consider is a step towards a general theory of being and society. The conceptualization, we think, includes a set of definitions and constructs that are congenial with each other. The overall conceptual structure is internally consistent. The theory is parsimonious and yet general. However, a theory is as good as the generalizations it would make available to the practitioners for use in real life situations; and hypotheses to researchers for testing for a further cumulation of knowledge. We end this presentation by suggesting a list of hypotheses and generalizations. These are suggested by way of examples only. Of course, further hypotheses and generalizations could be generated.

Generalizations for the Practitioner

The following generalizations can be suggested for the practicing change agent:

1. A change agent should look at all social dynamics as a process resulting from a multiplicity of power transactions.

2. Any change, in any social situation, should be viewed as a perturbation in that social situation and such a perturbation must be dealt with by the change agent for an appropriate resolution.

3. As a change strategy, the change agent must increase the power of the innovator system in relation to the adopter system.

4. Where number (3) above is not possible to do, or where participative strategies are selected (because of a particular value orientation), the change agent must enable adopters to make satisfying power transactions within the changed situation.

5. Part of the change strategy may be to enable individuals to cultivate new modes of experiencing power within newer social-symbolic systems brought to the adopters, extentially and symbolically.

6. In changing groups and institutions from outside, the change agent should offer these collectivities suitable quid pro quos for them to accept change.

7. Any change in any system should be considered possible, provided that adequate power is available to the change agent and can be brought to bear on the change situation.

Hypotheses for Testing

Some hypotheses are proposed to the researchers for testing which may result in developing confidence in the theoretical position presented here or

revising and extending this conceptualization to make it more explanatory of the real-life phenomena. Again, these are only by way of examples. Further hypotheses can be generated.

1. Motivations for adoption of innovation will be increased if individuals are enabled to see the possibilities for making more satisfying power transactions within a social-symbolic system in which they are now anchored.

2. Symptoms of deviancy may become subdued, or may completely disappear if deviant individuals are enabled to experience power within the accepted social-symbolic systems of the society.

3. Changes in individual motivations and behavior may be obtained by introducing individuals to new social-symbolic systems and enabling them to experience power in these new systems.

4. Individual sense of personal worth and effectiveness may be increased by merely offering the individual new reference group identifications.

Hypotheses relating to groups, institutions, and communities will be presented elsewhere.